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21 August 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Bunker's 16th Weekly (Saigon 3243, 16 August 1967)

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1. The past week was relatively quiet and Ambassador Bunker's report contains nothing basically new or startling. Hence, suggest you pass this one up without reading in detail.

2. Interesting points include a reiteration of his judgment that the Dong Ha campaign flap -- which has had an unfavorable impact on Congressional opinion -- was a simple mixup, compounded by subsequent misunderstandings and childish efforts by all sides to save "face." The Ambassador believes the election campaign is going reasonably well, under the circumstances, and that much of the journalistic and Congressional criticism is really unwarranted.

3. Ambassador Bunker quotes extensively from General Westmoreland's monthly assessment for July (paragraph 31), which paints a reasonably realistic picture. In essence, the enemy is continuing his strategy of attrition, seeking to spread our forces more thinly, to entice our units into battle under conditions favorable to the enemy, and to counter-attack Revolutionary Development operations. Through "economy of force" measures and superior mobility, our military forces have provided acceptable security to critical population centers and thwarted enemy plans for offensive operations. Our constant pressure on the enemy, especially in the coastal lowlands, has weakened his military structure and heightened popular resistance to the enemy's increasing demands for support.

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